

### 5.0 Nutrition Services

Effective Date: 11/06/14

#### 5.01 Nutrition Education Overview and Elements of Client-Centered Nutrition Education

**PURPOSE:** A primary goal of the WIC program is to provide quality preventive nutrition services that improve client health outcomes in a cost effective manner. This policy provides an overview of the nutrition education process and describes the elements of effective client-centered nutrition education. (See Exhibits 5.01A, Nutrition Education Definitions, and 5.01B, Elements of Effective Client-Centered Nutrition Education)

WIC nutrition education and counseling, including breastfeeding promotion and support, stresses the relationship between nutrition, physical activity and health. Client-centered approaches put client issues and goals at the core of WIC nutrition education delivery. WIC staff and clients partner to identify client's motivations for positive behavior changes and set attainable individual goals. WIC staff provide the information and support needed to make healthy lifestyle habits that impact a client's life course.

#### A. POLICY

1. A comprehensive and standardized assessment (Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment or VENA) must precede WIC nutrition education to obtain and synthesize relevant, accurate client health and diet information (Policy 2.13, Risk Determination).
2. Nutrition assessment and education must:
  - a. Be conducted in an environment that is friendly, supportive, accommodating, respectful, and welcoming.
  - b. Have a positive approach based on health outcomes, rather than deficiencies.
  - c. Promote active involvement of clients and/or their caregivers.
  - d. Explore participants existing knowledge and readiness for change.
3. During each certification period, local agencies must offer at least the required number of nutrition education contacts, on separate days, to clients, the parents or caregivers of infant and child clients, and whenever possible, the child clients themselves, at the following rate.

Number of Months of Certification	Number of Required Contacts
10-12 months	4
7-9 months	3
4-6 months	2
Up to 3 months	1

See Policy 5.02, Nutrition Education Contacts, for further details.

4. The client and CPA must cooperatively develop a nutrition education plan at the certification/recertification (CERT/RECERT) and infant/child evaluation (IEVAL/CEVAL) appointments (See Policies 5.03, Nutrition Education at Certification/Recertification Appointments, and 5.04, Nutrition Education at Infant/Child Evaluation Appointments).
  - a. The client must receive a copy of the Nutrition Education Plan Report at the CERT/RECERT and IEVAL/CEVAL. See Exhibit 5.01D, Sample Nutrition Education Plan Report.
5. Nutrition education must focus on the client's concerns in a way that is easily understood by the client and has practical relevance. A variety of nutrition education options, methods and materials must be used to meet the learning styles, needs, and preferences of individual clients. See Exhibit 5.01B, Elements of Effective Client-Centered Nutrition Education.
6. The nutrition education process must be interactive and involve opportunities for the client to:
  - a. Ask questions;
  - b. Demonstrate knowledge gained;
  - c. Discuss progress or barriers to behavior change; and,
  - d. Obtain support from staff trained to address the client's goals and concerns.
7. Nutrition education requirements are described in Policies:
  - a. 5.02, Nutrition Education Contacts;
  - b. 5.03, Nutrition Education at Certification/Recertification Appointments;
  - c. 5.04, Nutrition Education at Infant/Child Evaluation Appointments;
  - d. 5.05, Interim Nutrition Education, Client Feedback and Support;
  - e. 5.06, Required Services for High Risk Clients;
  - f. 5.07, Documentation of Nutrition Education;
  - g. 5.08, Nutrition Education Collaboration.
8. High risk clients, including clients receiving Class III formulas, must be offered individual nutrition counseling with a Registered Dietitian (RD) for development of an individual care plan (ICP). Additionally, any client may be scheduled to meet with an RD upon request. See Policy 5.05, Required Services for High Risk Clients.
9. Clients receive nutrition/breastfeeding education at no charge. Food benefits are not withheld or delayed for clients who refuse or fail to participate in nutrition education.
10. Local agencies must provide nutrition education that is accurate and up-to-date.
  - a. The State WIC Division serves as the key source for local agency nutrition education resources and information. See [www.michigan.gov/wic](http://www.michigan.gov/wic) or contact the State WIC Division.
  - b. Local agencies must review nutrition education materials obtained or developed independently using the WIC Nutrition Education Materials Evaluation Form (See Exhibit 5.01C, WIC Nutrition Education Materials Evaluation Form). Evaluations must be kept on file at the local agency as long as the material is in use.

11. Local agencies that develop group education and self-directed lesson modules must maintain written lesson plans and document annual review of these for accuracy and completeness. See Exhibit 5.01E, Nutrition Education Lesson Plans, for minimum components. Locally developed nutrition education modules or materials may be submitted to the State WIC Division for consideration of state-wide adaptation.
12. Federal regulations require that one/sixth (about 17%) of all local agency administrative funds be spent on nutrition education and breastfeeding promotion and support activities, excluding breastfeeding peer counselor (BFPC) grant funds. This is monitored in local agencies by a triennial nutrition education and breastfeeding time study.
13. Staff providing nutrition education services must meet qualifications stated in Policy 1.07, Local Agency Staffing.

#### References:

Federal Regulations 246.11 (Nutrition Education)  
Federal Regulations 246.14 (Time Study)  
USDA WIC Policy Memo 2008-4, WIC Nutrition Services Documentation, July 3, 2008  
WIC Nutrition Education Guidance, USDA, WIC Program, January 26, 2006  
WIC Nutrition Services Standards, USDA, FNS, August, 2013  
[www.michigan.gov/wic](http://www.michigan.gov/wic): WIC Providers/Nutrition Education Resources and Publications

#### Cross-References:

1.07 Local Agency Staffing Policy  
2.13 Nutrition Risk Criteria  
5.02 Nutrition Education Contacts  
5.03 Nutrition Education at Certification/Recertification Appointments  
5.04 Nutrition Education at Infant/Child Evaluation Appointments  
5.05 Interim Nutrition Education, Client Feedback & Support  
5.06 Required Services for High Risk Clients  
5.07 Documentation of Nutrition Education  
5.08 Nutrition Education Collaboration

#### Exhibits:

5.01A Nutrition Education Definitions  
5.01B Elements of Effective Client-Centered Nutrition Education  
5.01C WIC Nutrition Education Materials Evaluation Form  
5.01D Sample Nutrition Education Plan Report  
5.01E Nutrition Education Lesson Plans